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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/556,716	02/21/2006	James Kenneth McAlpine	M-0930.02	3308
41418	7590	11/13/2008		
LAW OFFICES OF CHRISTOPHER L. MAKAY			EXAMINER	
1634 MILAM BUILDING			NGUYEN, TUAN N	
115 EAST TRAVIS STREET			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78205-1763			3751	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			11/13/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/556,716	Applicant(s) MCALPINE, JAMES KENNETH
	Examiner Tuan N. Nguyen	Art Unit 3751

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 July 2008.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-30 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 7/23/08 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With respect to the applicant's argument against the Garguillo reference, it appears that the applicant position is narrower than the claimed language. The Garguillo stem (76, 72, 60) is being selectively adjustable in length where stem part (72) is movable up and down within stem part (60) to selectively adjust its length within the waste outlet for selectively engaging the seal (78) with a portion of an outlet waste to open and seal the outlet waste. The stem part (72) moves downward within part (60) to adjust its length within the waste outlet in response to a compressive force exerted on the stem part (76). Therefore, the broad language being claimed is met by the Garguillo reference.

With respect to the applicant's argument against the Peterson reference, it appears that the applicant position is narrower than the claimed language. The Peterson stem (16, 60, and about 56) is being selectively adjustable in length where stem (16, 60, and about 56) is movable up and down within member (16) to selectively adjust its length within the waste outlet for selectively engaging the seal (74) with a portion of an outlet waste (12) to open and seal the outlet waste. The stem moves downward to adjust its length within the waste outlet in response to a compressive force exerted on the stem (see col. 2, line 48). Therefore, the broad language being claimed is met by the Peterson reference.

Both of the Garguillo and Peterson device require the movement of the seal member up and down to effectively open and seal the waste outlet. Downey teaches an alternative mechanism to move the seal member up and down to effectively open and seal the waste outlet. The employment of Downey is merely a use of known technique to improve similar devices in the same way. One of ordinary skill in the art would have find an effective way to combine the features since the prior art are within the same field of endeavor.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-4, 6-14 and 19-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Garguillo as set forth in the previous office action.
4. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-14, 19-21 and 23-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Peterson as set forth in the previous office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garguillo or Peterson in view of Downey as set forth in the previous office action. The application of less than around 5 lbs of force varies the stem length would have been inherently obvious to one skill in the art at the time the invention was made in view of the Downey reference.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tuan N. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-4892. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (10:00-6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Huson can be reached on (571) 272-4887. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Tuan Nguyen/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3751

TN